SUBJECTS.

Dewan's reply.—The Peishkar, Mr. Sankara Menon, has reported on this subject and that report is now under consideration. I think that the member may reduce everything he has to say into writing in a clear form and give it to me and I shall consider it along with the other papers on the subject.

14. *Value of junglewood trees less than 10 vannams on puduvals not to be realised.*

Mr. P. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Pattanapuram Taluk) spoke of the practice of realising the value of junglewood trees, of four vannams and above, standing on puduval lands and of the hardship resulting thereby. Trees of above 10 vannams were alone useful and those of less girth have to be destroyed after payment of value, to prepare the land for cultivation. It was not possible to rear such small trees for selling them at a profit and pay tax for the land in the meanwhile, as it would take a lifetime for them to grow to a big size and cultivation would suffer. He therefore requested that the value of trees of above 3¾ and below 10 vannams should not be realised.

Mr. C. Krishna Iyer (Member, Nedumangad Taluk) requested that the value of trees should not be realised at the rates obtaining at the timber depôts. The size of the standing trees was being taken into calculation. This was hard. The expenses of taking them to the depôt should be deducted.

Dewan's reply.—At present, the practice is, when a puduval is registered, to realise from the applicant the value of all standing trees whose size is 3 vannams or more, and there are differential rates for the purpose :—

Between 3 & 5¾ vannams, the rate is 8 annas per tree.
Between 6 & 7¾ vannams, ... Rs. 2 per tree.
Between 8 & 9¾ vannams, ... Rs. 4 per tree.

It is now proposed by the member that all trees less than 10 vannams should be exempted from payment. That will involve a substantial sacrifice of revenue and Government are not prepared to undertake it.

The settlement rates for the valuation of trees have been introduced as a temporary measure for the expeditious closing of settlement operations. They are not the normal rates. When the settlement of a Taluk is over, the normal rates (now complained of) are introduced.

In view to the representations now made, however, Government will enquire into the whole question of these rates, the differences between them, the reasonableness of the rates and whether they work any hardship.

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